

REMARKS

This responds to the Office Action dated February 15, 2006, and the references cited therewith.

Claims 1, 5, 9 and 12 are amended, claim 2 is canceled, and claims 20 and 21 are added; as a result, claims 1 and 3-21 are now pending in this application.

Claims 20 and 21 are new. Applicant respectfully submits that these newly added claims distinguish over the cited references, and are supported by the present patent specification, for instance Figures 3B and 4; specification page 5, line 30 to page 6, line 3; and page 6, lines 12-16.

§102 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) for anticipation by Dinsdale (U.S. 4,732,061). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections for at least the following reasons. Applicant can not find in the cited reference, for example, a force amplifying linkage coupled between the single actuating device and the pair of gripping jaws, wherein the force amplifying linkage includes: a first camming linkage pivotally coupled between a first rocker and a first gripping jaw, and a second camming linkage pivotally coupled between a second rocker and a second gripping jaw, and rotation of the first and second rockers with respect to the first and second camming linkages provides a limited range of motion for the first and second gripping jaws, as recited in claim 1. Claims 2-4 depend from claim 1, and thereby include all of its limitations. Moreover, Applicant can not find in the cited reference, a force amplifying linkage coupled between the single actuating device and the pair of gripping jaws, wherein the pair of gripping jaws move in a range of motion sufficient to grip only a coupling portion of a drill stem, and the gripping jaws are substantially prevented from gripping a narrower portion of the drill stem, as recited in claim 5. Claims 6-8 depend from claim 5 and thereby include all of its limitations.

Reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-8 are respectfully requested.

§103 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 9-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lam (U.S. 4,703,811) or Bischel (U.S. 2002/0157870) or Willis (U.S. 4,403,666) in view of Dinsdale

(4,732,061). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections for at least the following reasons. Applicant can find no teaching or suggestion of, for example, a force amplifying linkage coupled between the single actuating device and the pair of gripping jaws, wherein the force amplifying linkage includes: a first camming linkage pivotally coupled between a first rocker and a first gripping jaw, and a second camming linkage pivotally coupled between a second rocker and a second gripping jaw, and rotation of the first and second rockers with respect to the first and second camming linkages provides a limited range of motion for the first and second gripping jaws, as recited in claim 9. Claims 10 and 11 depend from claim 9, and thereby include all of its limitations. Moreover, Applicant can find no teaching or suggestion of, for example, a force amplifying linkage coupled between the single actuating device and the pair of gripping jaws, wherein the pair of gripping jaws move in a range of motion sufficient to grip only a coupling portion of a drill stem, and the gripping jaws are substantially prevented from gripping a narrower portion of the drill stem, as recited in claim 12. Claims 13-15 depend from claim 12, and thereby include all of its limitations. Furthermore, Applicant can find no teaching or suggestion of, for example, actuating a first single actuator in a first drill gripping device to grip a first section of drill stem, wherein the first drill gripping device has a range of motion sufficient to grip only a coupling portion of the first section, and the first drill gripping device is substantially prevented from gripping a narrower portion of the first section, and actuating a second single actuator in a second drill gripping device to grip a second section of drill stem, wherein the second drill gripping device has a range of motion sufficient to grip only the coupling portion of the second section, and the second drill gripping device is substantially prevented from gripping a narrower portion of the second section, as recited in claim 16. Claims 17-19 depend from claim 16 and thereby include all of its limitations.

Reconsideration and allowance of claim 9-19 are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance, and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney at (612) 373-6944 to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

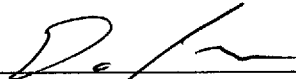
Respectfully submitted,

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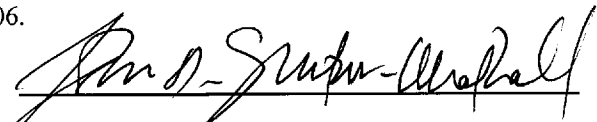
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By 
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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being filed using the USPTO's electronic filing system EFS-Web, and is addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this 15 day of May, 2006.



Name


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